

Members:

Rep. Claire Leuck, Chair
Rep. Dennis Heeke
Rep. Rolland Webber
Rep. William Friend
Rep. Jack Lutz
Rep. Michael Smith
Sen. Harold Wheeler, Vice-Chair
Sen. Robert Meeks
Sen. John Waterman
Sen. James Lewis
Sen. Katie Wolf
Sen. Richard Young



WATER RESOURCES STUDY COMMITTEE

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Authority: IC 2-5-25

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: July 29, 1998
Meeting Time: 1:00 p.m.
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington St.,
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 1

Members Present: Rep. Claire Leuck, Chair; Rep. William Friend; Rep. Jack Lutz; Rep. Michael Smith; Sen. Robert Meeks; Sen. Richard Young.

Members Absent: Rep. Dennis Heeke; Rep. Rolland Webber; Sen. Harold Wheeler; Sen. John Waterman; Sen. James Lewis; Sen. Katie Wolf.

Rep. Leuck, Chair of the Water Resources Study Committee, called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.

Committee members and interested parties made the following suggestions on what issues should be examined during the 1998 interim:

- use of a revolving loan fund to help with water accessibility and treatment issues.
- drainage issues, such as how the drainage law is working, the possibility of requiring all counties to have a drainage board, and what powers a drainage board should have.
- a water allocation plan.
- water run-off.
- sewer overflows.
- staffing issues related to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM).
- water utility rates.

Larry Macklin, DNR Director, announced that the DNR does not currently have any suggestions for topics to examine.

Mike Neyer, Director of DNR's Division of Water, commented that although there is a water shortage plan, it has not been officially adopted.

Glenn Pratt, an environmental consultant, provided a copy of the following items: *Indiana's Water Shortage Plan*, a memo from the State Budget Agency regarding budget requests, IDEM's *Surface Water Quality Monitoring Strategy 1996-2000*, and the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission's approval of new

schedules of rates and charges for water utility service.¹ Rep. Smith pointed out that the General Assembly has already acted on the staffing issue and suggested that it be discussed with the governor's office.

Jay Poe, the Huntington County Surveyor and President of the County Surveyors Association of Indiana, made the following comments. Some counties do not have planning commissions or zoning boards. One-third of the counties in Indiana do not have drainage boards. The Highway Extension and Research Project for Indiana Counties and Cities (HERPACC) has model ordinances. If a city and a county do not adopt the same ordinance, there could be problems. Counties do not like the new drainage law. Huntington County is looking into implementing a fee to file a petition for the removal of an obstruction in a drain. In response to questions from Rep. Leuck, Mr. Poe stated that he is not sure how he would like the drainage law changed. He added that some counties do not have a drainage board because of the county's terrain.

Rep. Leuck explained to Committee members that Rep. Heeke is concerned with farmers removing gravel from the Blue River. Mr. Neyer responded with the following comments. This practice has gone on for years. Individuals who would like to make a small, one-time removal are required to send a letter to the DNR requesting removal without having to get a permit. If an individual would like to remove gravel from a navigable river, he or she must pay a royalty fee to the state. Commercial operations are required to get a permit. Rep. Leuck remarked that the Natural Resources Study Commission has looked into this issue.

Rep. Leuck asked staff to provide information on whether any other states use revolving loan funds for water accessibility and treatment issues and what type of funds are available in Indiana.

The next meeting was scheduled for August 26, 1998 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 156-A of the Statehouse.

¹These documents are on file in the Legislative Information Center (LIC), Room 230, Statehouse, Indianapolis, Indiana. The telephone number of the LIC is (317) 232-9856, and the mailing address is 200 W. Washington St., Suite 301, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2789.